

am amazed—and I was speaking with a gathering of community college students who have focused on this as well—that in the name of “welfare reform,” we are now saying to many single parents—most of them women, and many of them in our community colleges—they have to leave school and take a job. In other words, this is the bitter irony: They are on the path to economic self-sufficiency and yet we are telling many of these parents, these women, “You have to leave college; you can’t complete your education; you must take this job, because these are the work force participation requirements.” It may be a \$6-an-hour job with no benefits; and a year from now they are without health care coverage, they are worse off than they are now, as are their children.

That is outrageous. So I am going to have an amendment for student exemption for these adults who are in school trying to complete their education so they can reach economic self-sufficiency, so that any State that wants to can at least say, look, we want to exclude these parents who are in school from the work force participation requirement. That makes a lot of sense if we are interested in these mothers and children being able to do better.

The second question I want to raise for colleagues is—and I don’t know if this will be an amendment on this bill or not, but as long as we are talking about education, which is what we are going to do with the Coverdell bill, and trying to do better for children—how come we cut food stamp benefits by 20 percent? The majority of the beneficiaries are children from families making under \$7,500 a year.

As I travel around the country, it all has to do with the questions you ask. It all has to do with whether you are willing to listen. It all has to do with what communities you are willing to visit. I find a lot of teachers telling me that a lot of their students can’t do well because they come to school hungry. Why in the world did we cut the major safety net program for the working poor, the primary recipients, by 20 percent by the year 2002? I think we need to revisit that question.

Mr. President, there is another issue that I want to raise that may be an amendment, or may not be, which is that it is impossible to focus on education and children doing well without focusing on the adults or the adult. The two variables—to wear a kind of political science hat for a moment—that have had the greatest impact, or the two primary causes of whether a child does well in school or not, the two most important factors—that is the word I am struggling for—are the educational attainment and the income status of the parent or parents.

Well, if that is the case, I think we ought to start asking the question, if we are looking at the learning gap in our country and what children do well and what children don’t do well, what about so many of these communities—

and William Julius Wilson, a great sociologist, has written about this in his book called “The Disappearance of Work”—what about these communities where there are no jobs, even with the economy humming along as it is? What about many of the ghettos and barrios in rural areas where there are no jobs, and the parents or parent can’t find employment, can’t find a job at a decent wage? What is the connection between the economic status, the job status of the parent or parents, and the educational achievement of the children?

I think that, at the very minimum, we ought to ask labor and the Department of Education to do a study of this and come back and provide us with some evidence. I will tell you that I think we will find a very strong correlation. And I will tell you that I am all for work. In fact, I think the most important policy goal is to make sure that when people in America work full-time, 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, they are not poor. I can think of a variety of different things we ought to do to make sure that happens. We also ought to look in a lot of communities where people live where there are no jobs at all, nor is there transportation to get into the suburbs where those jobs do exist.

I say to my colleagues, this is not just an urban issue; this is a big rural issue as well. I look forward to when the Coverdell bill comes out to the floor. I look forward to the debate and discussion.

I see my colleague from Missouri on the floor. I don’t want to take any more time. Before Senator ASHCROFT takes the floor, I was talking about the importance of getting a resolution on China, urging the administration and the U.N. Commission on Human Rights that we ought to take a position on the violation of human rights in China. I know my colleague is a strong supporter. I say to my colleague that we are going to have tremendous support on an up-or-down vote. I am urging the administration today to please move forward. That was the other agenda item for me.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ASHCROFT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a fellow from my office, Neil Kulkarni, be allowed privileges of the floor during the pendency of morning business and my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Minnesota for his kind remarks. I do share his concerns on human rights in China.

STATEMENT MADE BY U.N. SECRETARY GENERAL KOFI ANNAN

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise to address the disturbing comments made yesterday by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan. Apparently emboldened by his recent agreement with Saddam Hussein, Annan stated on ABC’s “This Week” that the United States would have to consult with the Security Council before launching military strikes against Saddam Hussein.

He stated:

If the United States had to strike, I think some sort of consultations with the other members would be required.

Let me state categorically that the United States does not require the permission of the United Nations to use our military forces in the pursuit of our national interests. Nor does the United Nations have any authority to require that the United States use our military forces if it would seek to deploy them.

The United States has never, at any time, ceded to the United Nations any power to require the deployment of American forces against the wishes or the judgment of the United States, nor have we ceded to the United Nations any power to forbid the use of our military force.

Mr. President, the comments by Secretary General Annan over the weekend are indicative of a growing arrogance of a United Nations that has grown accustomed to dictating American foreign policy toward Iraq. With U.S. policy toward Iraq in drift over the last 6 years, Secretary General Annan was able to take the lead in dealing with Saddam’s provocations. What has the United Nations achieved? Has Saddam been punished? Have his weapons of mass destruction been destroyed?

On the contrary, Saddam is stronger today than he was before instigating the crisis 4 months ago. He is better off across the board militarily, politically, and economically. He has blocked weapons inspections and moved weapons technology and equipment for several months. He has won greater prestige in the region and in the Arab world generally. He will be allowed to sell more oil. There is growing talk of dismantling the rest of the sanctions regime.

The administration has compared Saddam to Hitler, but the President’s policies are laying the groundwork for another Munich in the Persian Gulf. Saddam is the chief terrorist of a terrorist government whose weapons of mass destruction threaten the United States and our allies in the Middle East. The administration seems pleased, however, to make concessions to Saddam through the United Nations. More oil sales and a politicized inspection regime for Presidential sites in Iraq have meant victory for Saddam.

Mr. President, the absence of Presidential leadership on Iraq has not served the United States well in the

Middle East. Statements by the U.N. Secretary General that imply U.N. oversight of U.S. military forces are indicative of U.N. arrogance and disrespect for U.S. sovereignty. The deployment of our forces to defend our national interests is not subject to the approval of the United Nations or any other multinational organization.

I intend to place before the Senate an opportunity for the body to state clearly the ability of the United States to make decisions about the deployment of its forces, without regard to, or prior consent from, the Security Council or any other international organization. I believe it is imperative that we make it clear that the United States will not cede any measure of sovereign control of its Armed Forces to the United Nations.

The Constitution charges the President with the duties of Commander in Chief, and it is time for this administration to defend America's interests with clarity and resolve. The drift and inconsistency that has defined this administration's Iraq policy over the last 6 years will only be perpetuated by subcontracting U.S. foreign policy to the United Nations.

If we continue to drift, Mr. President, the President of the United States will find himself asking permission of U.N. bureaucrats before he takes action to secure the interests of the United States. That cannot be allowed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business Friday, March 6, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,525,824,113,483.61 (Five trillion, five hundred twenty-five billion, eight hundred twenty-four million, one hundred thirteen thousand, four hundred eighty-three dollars and sixty-one cents).

One year ago, March 6, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,538,686,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred thirty-eight billion, six hundred eighty-six million).

Twenty-five years ago, March 6, 1973, the federal debt stood at \$454,901,000,000 (Four hundred fifty-four billion, nine hundred one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,070,923,113,483.61 (Five trillion, seventy billion, nine hundred twenty-three million, one hundred thirteen thousand, four hundred eighty-three dollars and sixty-one cents) during the past 25 years.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KYL). Morning business is closed.

INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT OF 1997

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now

resume consideration of S. 1173, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1173) to authorize funds for construction of highways, for highway safety programs, and for mass transit programs, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill with a modified committee amendment in the nature of a substitute (Amendment No. 1676.)

Mr. CHAFEE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, we are here ready to do business on the so-called ISTEA II legislation. There are a host of amendments out there which we would like to have brought up; either present them, or consideration to see if we can accept them, work out something, or, if not, go to votes.

But we are here to do business. The store is open. I very much hope that those who have amendments will bring them over.

I must say, Mr. President, if people who say they have amendments do not bring amendments over, I lose sympathy for them if later on they say they have amendments and they want time and so forth. Now is the time when nothing else is interfering with the action. So I urge my colleagues who are listening to please bring their amendments over so that we can deal with them.

Seeing nobody on the floor who wishes to present an amendment, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I wonder if I may speak as in morning business for about 10 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENFORCE OIL EMBARGO ON IRAQ

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, although stories about Iraq have moved off page 1, history teaches us that we should be prepared for another crisis, and I will tell you why. Most of the previous debate on Iraq has focused on military options or support for opposition groups, but I am here to call the attention of my colleagues to an issue that seems to have been lost. Where is the will of the world to enforce the economic sanctions, including the embargo on oil sales, that date back to the end of Operation Desert Storm?

We must go back, I think, to the original purpose of the economic sanctions against Iraq and simply shut down Saddam Hussein's ability to fund his program for weapons of mass destruction. Because there is a signifi-

cant amount of oil that he is able to sell, and the proceeds are not going for humanitarian needs in Iraq; they are going into Saddam Hussein's pocket, and, as a consequence, he is fueling his military machine.

In my opinion there is only one way to shut down Saddam's military machine. We must effectively cut off the flow of oil from Iraq. I would like to share a few facts that my colleagues may not be aware of, but that are critical to the issue of how Saddam Hussein maintains his current grip on power. He does that by the cash flow generated from illegal oil sales.

Revenue from oil exports have historically represented nearly all of Iraq's foreign exchange earnings. In the year preceding Operation Desert Storm, Iraq's export earnings totaled \$10.5 billion with 95 percent attributed to oil exports, so that's really his cash flow. Iraq's imports during the same year, 1990, totaled only \$6.6 billion.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 687, passed in the 1991 at the end of the gulf war, requires that international economic sanctions, including an embargo on the sale of oil from Iraq, remain in place until Iraq discloses and destroys its weapons of mass destruction programs and capabilities and undertakes unconditionally never to resume such activities.

But the teeth in Resolution 687 have effectively been removed with the expansion of the so-called "oil-for-food" exception to the sanctions. The first loosening of the sanctions occurred in 1995, when Security Council Resolution 986 allowed Iraq to export \$1 billion in oil every 90 days—\$4 billion over one year.

And most recently, during the period when Saddam was again violating Security Council resolution by refusing to allow international inspectors to conduct their work, the United Nations voted to more than double the amount of oil Iraq can export per year.

On February 20, the U.N. Security Council, with the Clinton administration's support, adopted Resolution 1153 which will allow Iraq to export \$10.52 billion in oil per year—\$5.256 billion every 180 days. In other words, Iraq is now authorized to export nearly as much oil, in today's dollars, as it did before it invaded Kuwait.

So we have now given Saddam Hussein the green light to completely rebuild his oil export capacity. As Patrick Clawson, from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, observed in a recent analysis of Resolution 1153:

The UN-authorized limit translates into 2.25 million barrels per day (mbd), if the price averages \$13 barrel. In addition, Iraq produces .4 mbd for domestic use and .2 mbd for export to Jordan and smuggling out the Gulf or to Turkey. That means Iraq would have to produce 2.85 mbd to make use of the full UN quota. In fact, it is unlikely that Iraq could produce more than 2.5 mbd today and it may take Iraq until the end of 1999 before it could reach a production level that takes full advantage of the UN-authorized export. In short, Iraq faces no effective limit